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### Doni votivi, pratiche rituali e società

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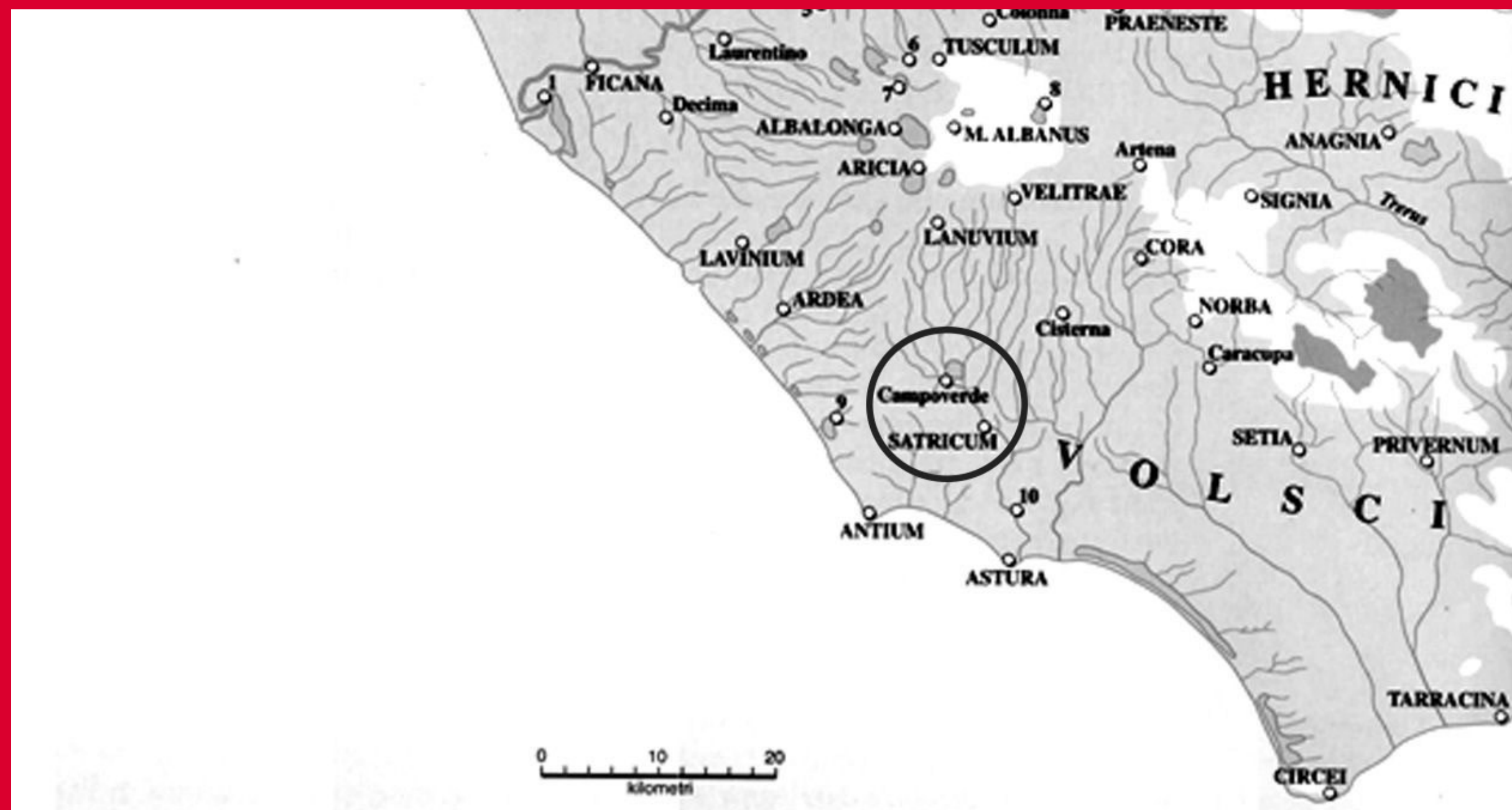
## Doni votivi, pratiche rituali e società.

### *A research project on the cult place of Laghetto del Monsignore (Campoverde, Central-Italy).*

**Tanja van Loon, MA** (Groningen Institute of Archaeology, RuG, The Netherlands)  
Sessione tematica “Luoghi di culto nel mondo etrusco-italico”

#### The cult place of ‘Laghetto del Monsignore’

Laghetto del Monsignore (henceforth LdM) is a spring cult place located in Latium Vetus (Central Italy), situated 4 km northwest of the ancient settlement of Satricum.



The site was discovered in the 1960's by Carmine Ampolo and Valeria Giovannini,<sup>1</sup> when a large concentration of pottery was found in and near the spring lake. Almost ten years later a rescue excavation took place, resulting in a short report on the excavation and finds in *Archeologia Laziale* I. In December 2008 the cult place of LdM was in the news again after a large scale rescue operation by the *Comando dei Carabinieri per la Tutela del Patrimonio Culturale*, following private looting. During this intervention materials were confiscated from an illegal excavation site alongside the lake, as well as from the house of the landowner.



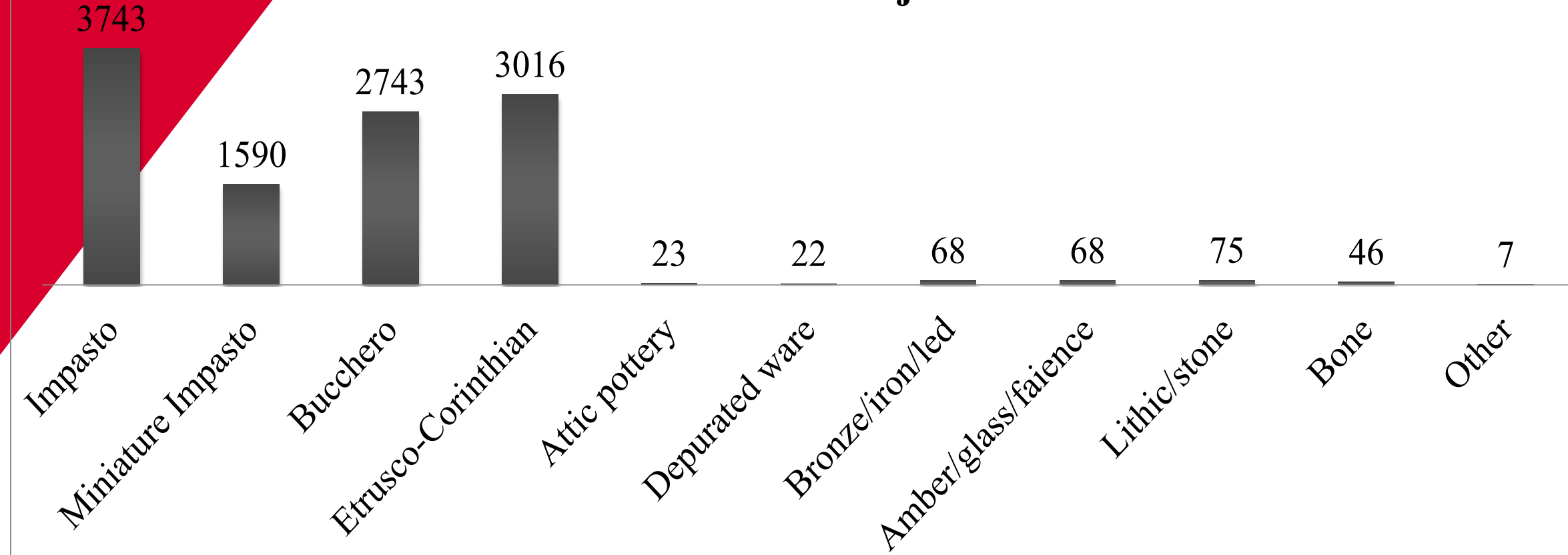
Laghetto del Monsignore  
(Campoverde, Lazio)

#### The Assemblage

As part of a collaboration between the Groningen Institute of Archaeology and the Soprintendenza per Beni Archeologici del Lazio,<sup>3</sup> the materials from the rescue operations as well as two other collections of LdM are studied, together holding 11.401 fragments of pottery, metal, amber, glass and bone. This study is due to be published shortly.

The main part of the four collections consist of pottery, of which the largest component the locally made impasto pottery, comprising both full-sized and miniature vessels. The second largest pottery group is formed by the Etruscan pottery types, including Bucchero and Etrusco-Corinthian pottery.

#### Number of objects



#### Bibliography

- L. Crescenzi, *Campoverde*, in *Archeologia Laziale*, I, Roma 1978, pp. 51-55.  
V. Giovannini, C. Ampolo, *Campoverde*, in *Civiltà del Lazio primitivo*, p. 347.  
M. Kleibrink, *The miniature votive pottery dedicated at the 'Laghetto del Monsignore', Campoverde*, in *Paleohistoria*, 39/40, Groningen 1997-98, pp. 441-511.

#### The Materials

Although three impasto fragments can be dated in the Eneolithic period and one fragment probably in the Middle Bronze Age, there is no evidence for regular activity at the site of Laghetto del Monsignore until the Early Iron Age. Only a small number of objects can be dated in the earliest phases of the sanctuary (Latial Period II), mainly consisting of impasto pottery of various shapes. In addition to the full-sized impasto pottery a large number of miniature impasto vases has been found. Almost all the miniature impasto shapes correspond to impasto shapes of ‘normal’ size, such as jars, cups and bowls. Yet, some of the vases are unique for votive deposits, such as kernoi and votive disks. The offering of locally made full-sized and miniature impasto vases continued throughout the entire time-span of the sanctuary..

The main part of the votives can be dated to the Orientalizing and Archaic Period. Some of the impasto vases from this period, such as spiral amphorae and tazze with comb-motifs, bear much resemblance to the pottery from the nearby settlement of Satricum. Besides the locally made impasto pottery also a lot of imported pottery appears from the Late Orientalising Period onwards, primarily Bucchero and Etruscan-Corinthian pottery. In addition to the pottery from Etruria a small percentage of Attic black-figure pottery has been found, which is dated to the last decennia of the 6th century. Evidence for ritual activity in the end of the 6th and the 5th century is scarce and consists of some bucchero and coarse ware sherds only.

Besides pottery, artefacts in metal, glass, amber and stone have been found. The metal objects were principally made of bronze and include: human representations in sheet bronze, jewellery, a bronze bowls, and several fibulae. Also, many coloured glass and amber beads were collected, some decorated with white eyes, while one bead had the shape of a tiny bottle.

#### Research project: ‘Defining the Ritual, Analyzing Society.’

A more in-depth analysis of the votive deposit will be carried out within the framework of the authors PhD research: ‘Defining the Ritual, Analyzing Society. The religious and social significance of material culture in pre-Roman cult places in Central Italy’. The aim of this research is to investigate the relationship between ritual practice at cult places and social change in Latial society. To get better insight in the ritual practice at LdM and the relationship with the settlement (and sanctuaries) of Satricum, three fundamental issues are raised. These are related to:

- 1) the study and interpretation of persistence and change in the ritual practiced at Laghetto del Monsignore ;
- 2) contextualization of the cult place in its regional context;
- 3) inferences on the relationship between changes in ritual practices and social change in contemporary Latial society.

The application of these approaches will highlight specific transformations of the cult place of LdM, and allows to compare the changes that took place in Satricum and at LdM, while it provides the means for a comparative analysis of the various contemporaneous sanctuaries in Latium.

#### Notes

1. Giovannini & Ampolo 1976, p. 347.  
2. Crescenzi 1978, p. 51; The miniatures have been published by prof. Kleibrink in *Palaeohistoria* 39/40.  
3. The project is supervised by dr. Francesco di Mario of the Soprintendenza per Beni Archeologici del Lazio and Prof.dr. P.A.J. Attema of the Groningen Institute of Archaeology. Protocol number: Prot. MBAC-SBA-LAZ N.2131, Class 31.10.04/1D 22-02-2010.



Impasto decoration LPIIB  
(Cat.nr: CVlib2437)



Impasto miniature Coppa  
biansata (Cat.nr: CVlib3118)



Impasto amphora with ‘spirals’  
and comb motif (Cat.nr. 144132)



Etrusco-Corinthian aryballos  
(Cat.nr: CV'10.0244)



Bucchero chalice  
(Cat.nr.: CV'10.0247)



Sheet Bronzes and a bronze fibulae



Glass and amber beads